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Two major considerations are involved in successfully educating culturally disadvantaged youth at the elementary school level. First, it is necessary to determine the characteristics of effective teachers of the disadvantaged. Teachers of the disadvantaged must have good mental health, want to teach the disadvantaged, and be creative, curious, highly skilled, professional, and unprejudiced. Therefore, teacher education institutions preparing teachers for work in urban slum schools must individualize programs; provide early, varied, and continuing direct experiences with children in community and school situations; encourage able men to teach at the elementary school level; and choose cooperating teachers selectively. Second, it is necessary to determine the role of course work in curriculum and methodology in the preservice preparation of teachers of the disadvantaged. Such course work should help students to base classroom programs on children's needs, understand the peer culture of the child, establish and maintain a healthy emotional climate in the classroom, function democratically in classrooms and enable children to practice democratic skills, learn ways of arranging an effective classroom environment, be creative in their teaching, become skillful in selecting appropriate learning experiences for individual children, and evaluate old concepts of educational practice in light of recent research. (A 17-item bibliography is appended.) (SG)

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PREPARING ELEMENTARY TEACHERS FOR CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED SCHOOLS

Nancy O'Brien

Presented at the Conference Honoring

Florence B. Stratemeyer

French Lick, Indiana, June 10-12, 1965

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PREPARING ELEMENTARY TEACHERS FOR CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED SCHOOLS*

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Introduction

Newspapers, current popular magazines, and professional literature featuring articles concerned with modern education reflect several kinds of problems related to children and how they should be educated. The increasing frequency of articles dealing with the education of the culturally disadvantaged has alerted all citizens to the need to eliminate handicaps--personal, social, and cognitive--with which a large percentage of lower class slum children begin their adult lives.

It is significant that within the past five years programs of national conferences for educators have included among other important considerations a variety of topics related to the disadvantaged. Teacher educators in many metropolitan colleges are discussing and evaluating their professional sequence offerings in an attempt to find more effective ways of helping preservice and in-service teachers to face classroom situations more realistically. One of the questions with which they are grappling is whether the eudcation of teachers for the deprived should be different from that of other teachers.

There are those who subscribe to the belief that the good teacher can teach any child, whether he comes from an advantaged middle-class home or from a rat-infested tenement dwelling. There is undoubtedly an equally large number of professional educators who feel that school programs for young city slum dwellers should be uniquely geared to the needs of such children. Advocates of this belief suggest that some of the needs are different and that because deprived children come to school with certain deficits not typical of middle-class boys and girls their teachers must be equipped with certain personality traits and classroom strategies for a special kind of teaching learning environment.

There would appear to be some agreement that part of the subject matter of the course work in teacher preparation programs related to social and psychological foundations must include a study of the societies and family patterns from which lower-class children come as well as a thorough knowledge of the developmental and behavior characteristics of such youngsters. Such specific relevance must not end, it is recommended, with foundations courses. Several colleges in large metropolitan areas are taking steps to help students explore ways of directly applying psychological, anthropological, and sociological information about culturally disadvantaged children and youth as it relates to curriculum emphases and methodology.

One of the purposes of this paper will be to briefly suggest some characteristics of elementary school teachers (although secondary school teachers would not be excluded) that may positively affect lower-class

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children's school progress. However, the major concern is with a list of guidelines specifically related to college course work in curriculum and methodology for prospective elementary school teachers in depressed urban areas.

Prior to discussing some guiding principles for courses in curriculum and methodology specifically related to the preparation of prospective elementary school teachers of lower-class urban children there follow some thoughts and generalizations about the essential characteristics of such professional workers.

Characteristics of Effective Teachers of Disadvantaged Children

At the top of the list of characteristics should be placed good mental health. Tensions in slum-area schools are considerably greater than in other communities. The concept of the teacher as a transmitter of knowledge, as well as someone whose job it is to help, may be alien to some slum children who come from homes in which "schooling" is not valued and where children's relationships with adults may never have reached any further heights than their having been assigned tasks as assistant babysitters of younger siblings, errand runners, and general chore doers. The teacher who meets with negative attitudes on the part of some slum youngsters toward school must be prepared to meet such realities with good will, an outgoing and warm personality, as well as an educational program worth getting excited about.

The question is debatable as to whether disadvantaged children's progress is more positively affected in a classroom climate in which is held strict adherence to standards for behavior and academic performance. However, maintaining rigid behavior standards in a class in which there are several children with serious emotional handicaps could be classified as malpractice and could possibly be a teacher's downfall. Further elaboration of this point is found in the discussion of Principle III [1] of this presentation.

In addition to the development of children's senses, (the emphasis upon which is recommended in the Montessori method of teaching), teachers themselves must develop a variety of different senses in their work with children from deprived backgrounds. The first is a sense of humor. Being able to laugh at one's self and with children can be the salvation of an otherwise doomed day. A sense of what is truly important to lower-class children and the common sense to provide for the expression of their special interests within a classroom program are essential components in a professional person.

Slum-area teachers must feel a sense of commitment.[2] It is known that a large percentage of teachers in depressed-area schools would prefer teaching assignments in other "less difficult" communities. Teacher morale

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[1] See page 9.

[2] Passow, A. Harry, ed. Education in Depressed Areas. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1963. p. 275.

in some slum schools in low. Many teachers seem bored and, in some cases, indifferent to the problems of the children they teach. Part of the boredom and indifference stems from a lack of knowledge of what it takes to motivate such children. Haubrich suggests the following: "Our major task will be to find some way to indicate the professional rewards in the culturally deprived situation and to base instruction and experience in the undergraduate years on the realities of these situations."3/

It is one thing to prepare young people imbued with missionary spirit and the spirit of adventure for teaching in depressed areas. It is something else again to keep their interest consistently high in order that they will remain in their positions and will share their enthusiasm with other potential professional workers in urban schools. Many teachers "do not view teaching in culturally depressed areas as a distinction, and the biting issue is that our society does not usually view it as a distinction."4/ School administrators must find ways of helping teachers of slum children to gain personal satisfaction and status in the profession. There is not enough evidence that would indicate that additional monetary consideration for such personnel is either practical or suitable.

The kind of teacher who will make the most significant contribution in any educational enterprise is the one who is open to new ideas and to new ways of working and who encourages students to believe and behave similarly. College instructors responsible for the preparation of teachers must provide avenues for their students to explore, to seek out information from a variety of sources, and to make decisions on the basis of wide consideration of varying points of view. In this way can be laid the groundwork for meaningful teaching performance in the elementary school classroom. Teachers of slum children who do not have avilable in helpful measure information about or a clearly defined body of principles basic to teaching such boys and girls must be prepared to keep an open mind and to try methods and materials in their work in the classroom.

It has been observed in some schools in depressed areas in New York City that a number of teachers in such institutions resort to overly formalized and unnecessarily restrictive methods of disciplining children.5/ It is likely that one of the causes of this type of teacher behavior is frustration. Is it not possible that teacher preparing instituions have a responsibility to find ways of preparing teachers to meet with the kind of uninhibited and occasionally "disrespectful" (in middle-class terms) behavior sometimes associated with lower-class urban children? In addition to the inability to accept children's needs for some freedom of action in a classroom, it is

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3/ Ibid., p. 256.

4/ Ibid., p. 248.

5/ See page 19 of Project TRUE Final Report 1962-64 for list of completed curriculum materials. Included are some audio tape recordings of beginning teaching experiences as well as a comprehensive slection of transcribed running notes of classroom observations made by a Project TRUE school visitation team.

equally conceivable that some beginning teachers who have difficulty in relaxing with children many not yet have solved the developmental tasks of achieving personal independence and those that relate to the evolution of a healthy teacher image. The significant point to be made here is that the good teacher is one who is personally secure and capable of making decisions concerning her professional performance. Teacher educators must be charged with the responsibility of helping students achieve this goal.

It has been recommended by several writers in the field of urban education that more men be encouraged to prepare to teach in such areas. Miriam Goldberg supports this point of view and suggests that male teachers be prepared for both the elementary as well as the junior high school levels because of "the lack of adequate male identification models in the homes of many of the disadvantaged boys..."[6/] If it is important that slum-area boys, particularly, work with more men teachers, the colleges have a job of attracting good, solid, young male citizens into teaching. It goes without saying that all that has been presented thus far relative to teacher characteristics would have to be applied to the preparation of male as well as female professionals.

In addition to the foregoing, the following points are offered for consideration in preparing teachers of urban slum-area children:

1. Kenneth Clark and others support the view that many teachers who work with environmentally deprived boys and girls have built-in prejudices that such children are uneducable.[7/] Teachers who are to work with such children must be free of such prejudice.

2. There is some expressed concern among experts in the field of urban education that it is inadvisable to place new, inexperienced teachers in such locales. It is in such schools, so it is recommended, that the experienced master teachers should be placed. Mel Ravitz states, for example, that "Every effort should, of course, be made to encourage the very best teachers in the school system to volunteer for the critical assignments of the depressed areas."[8/] The people who know children, who have worked at length with curriculum materials, who feel secure about themselves and the kind of job of which they are capable may be the ones who make the most significant contributions in solving the educational problems of urban children and youth. There is now sufficient evidence that a young inexperienced teacher, fresh from college courses and observation, participation, and student-teaching programs--integrated with course work--equipped with a sense of commitment and a readiness to continue to learn on the job cannot be equally as effective.[9/]

[6/] Passow, op. cit., p. 93.

[7/] Ibid., p. 104

[8/] Ibid., p. 16

[9/] See Project 120 - A Special Student Teaching Program in Difficult Junior High Schools. Hunter College, New York.

3. Teacher preparing institutions and school administrators must work to find ways through continuing preservice and in-service programs to prepare master teachers skilled in working with children, student teachers, and colleagues.

4. Slum schools must be staffed with a solid nucleus of permanently-licensed, proficent, cooperating teachers ready to participate in the education of prospective and in-service teaching personnel, as well as of children.

We have a long way to go in solving the many knotty educational problems that exist in lower-class neighborhoods. It is encouraging to know of the work of college faculties and school personnel who are actively involved in most of the major cities of the country on the behalf of depressed-area children and youth.[10/]

In summary then, the following statements are proposed as the more important points made in this part of the paper.

A. Teachers of culturally deprived children must:
   1. have good mental health;
   2. want to teach such children;
   3. be creative individuals who are constantly curious about and open to suggestions and new ideas related to educational principles and practice;
   4. be highly skilled professionals possessed of a thorough understanding and knowledge of the problems and conditions, both personal and social, that affect the learning of such children; and
   5. be free of prejudice.

B. Teacher-preparing institutions servicing special service schools must:
   1. move toward individualizing programs for preservice candidates to allow for maximum development in terms of professional preparation (Students preparing to teach in slum schools will need different experiences as well as some in common with others whose professional goals are projected toward work in more privileged neighborhoods.);
   2. provide early, varied, and some continuing direct experiences with children in community and school situations;
   3. encourage personally secure, able, men students to teach on the elementary school level;
   4. be selective about the teachers under whose guidance students will work in classroom situations.

Teacher education is a monumental task. Preparation of teachers for depressed urban areas calls for excellence.

[10/] The work of Project TRUE at Hunter College, New York City, and of the Great Cities Program are excellent examples of concerted efforts. See bibliography.

What Role Should Course Work in Elementary Curriculum and Methodology Play in the Preservice Preparation of Teachers of Lower-Class Urban Children?

The study of curriculum is but a part of the total sequence of professional experiences for prospective elementary school teachers. Students' understandings of what they are learning in relation to classroom practice can be enhanced if their work is accompanied by a well-guided observation-participation program in which they have direct experience in the application of principles of teaching and learning as they relate to specific classroom settings.[11/] The purpose of the remainder of this paper is to deal with some suggested guidelines for the study of the elementary school curriculum in the preservice education of teachers of lower-class urban children. Suggestions made should not be seen as exclusively related to the preparation of elementary school teachers. Each of the guidelines listed could be applied in the consideration of programs for prospective secondary school teachers. Similarly, each of the statements apply to study and discussion in foundations courses for all teachers.

1. Course Work in Elementary School Curriculum and Methodology for Prospective Teachers in Depressed Areas Should Help Students to Base Classroom Programs on the Needs of the Children.

The major responsibility of every classroom teacher is to recognize and provide for individual differences and to be constantly aware that there are variations in learning in any individual. Children differ in their interest to learn, in the speed with which they learn, and in certain aptitudes. An individual child may excel in arithmetic but be less advanced in his ability to ge along comfortably with his peers on a social studies committee. Knowledge of children's needs to belong, for self-esteem, to succeed, to achieve a degree of independence, and to be challenged, within reasonable limits, are some of the realities with which a teacher must work.

Knowledge of the needs of children presupposes a thorough understanding of them that comes from reading about them and direct experience with them. Instructors in "methods" courses have a major responsibility to help students make effective use of generalizations from the study of growth and development of the child and from educational psychology as they ~~deal~~ with basic principles of curriculum development. Content from the disciplines of anthropology and sociology will assume added significance as students make use of such information in their deliberations about the nature of the urban child and his educational needs.

11/ It is accepted practice in some teacher education programs to include a period of student teaching as a concomitant experience for students of curriculum and methodology. In such instances student teaching is seen as essential in integrating attitudes, understandings, and skills as they apply to teaching, and more effective because of the intensive and continuing nature of the experience.

In addition to studying school records and observing children in the school setting, students of curriculum should be thoroughly acquainted with the kinds of communities from which children come. Haubrich's suggestions for a student teaching program could be as effectively utilized in a well-organized program of observation and participation that might accompany course work in curriculum. He recommends that students' experiences include: "a welfare receiving center, public housing developments and private tenements, a local newspaper and its editor, the local school board, a mental hygiene clinic, and a children's shelter..."12/

Guided observation and participation in urban settings should help prospective urban teachers to recognize that the homes and community lives of such children are in many cases markedly different than they are for most middle-class boys and girls. Slum urban life tends to be characterized by overcrowded conditions, poor sanitation, frequence of communicable diseases, infrequent total family communication, lack of family stability, little privacy and few of the fringe benefits of a full middle-class life that might include family trips to museums and the country or acquaintance with a variety of reading materials.

Handicaps that stem from deprived urban living-marginal health, inadequate language development, undeveloped or imparied self-concepts, poor work habits, and lack of enriching at-home and beyond-the-community experiences--must be taken into consideration as students discuss and plan curriculum in such areas. A child's borderline health will negatively affect his interest in participating in a class discussion about plans for a school dance festival. Lack of verbal give-and-take, so often a part of middle-class home and neighborhood life, should be a consideration when planning a language arts program and in selecting reading experiences for slum boys and girls. Minimal experience with centers of educational interest outside the school community should be taken into consideration as teachers in depressed area schools work with children in planning field trips.

Involvement with experienced and successful teachers of urban children should be a requirement for students of methodology. Teachers who are free to experiment and to be creative in their approach to teaching must be selected to work with preservice practitioners. These master teachers should give evidence of their ability to put into practice as many as possible of the accepted principles for effective teaching-learning situations. The existence of such principles is too well known to justify an extended account of them. They are, for example, the previously mentioned principle of individual differences; the principles of involvement of the learner, of motivation as a prerequisite for learning, and of transfer as a necessary learning outcome.

Students in methods courses must study about and have direct experience with school programs that capitalize upon the positive aspects of individualized instruction. They need to learn ways of developing teacher-made materials for children to work on independently. Self-help educational materials are essential for children from overcrowded homes who need special help in skill development.

12/Passow, op. cit., p. 252

Urban children's problems of distraction, of being able to attend to some learning tasks for only short periods of time, of facing school with certain deficits, such as: limited experiential background and little direct verbal stimulation of the kind with which most middle-class youngsters are equipped[13] must be studied in courses related to curriculum. Critical evaluation of the advisability in the practice of homogeneous grouping as well as consideration of a non-graded class structure must be additional concerns.

2. Course Work in Elementary School Curriculum and Methodology for Prospective Teachers in Depressed Areas Should Help Students to Understand the Peer Culture of the Environmentally Deprived Child.

Study of the community, mentioned previously, should contribute to a student's understanding of the peer culture in depressed urban areas. In addition, students must be helped to find ways to guide boys and girls residing in such communities to understand themselves and others in the same community. Instruction in transmitting information related to the nature of ethnic and religious backgrounds, as well as to the history of interrelationships and frictions characteristic of minority group communities should be important emphases in curriculum study for preservice teachers. Such information may be dealt with best in the social studies program.

Students will need help in learning ways of studying interaction in classroom situations. Learning to make effective use of sociogram and anecdotal record data is important, as is the development of skills necessary for informal contacts in discussions and interviews.

Observing and studying child behavior in school and in the neighborhood--experiences ordinarily reserved to accompany course work in growth and development--also can be valuable for students of curriculum as they attempt to learn about peer group mores and interests of children in urban areas.

A need for all prospective teachers, as well as those in service, will be the ability to continually test the attitudes and understandings of the children with whom they work. It becomes the responsibility of a methods instructor, as it is for all involved in teacher education, to tune in to what students are thinking and feeling about boys and girls. "A highly personal regimen of self-analysis under expert guidance, for each teacher to come to terms with his attitudes, prejudices, felt inadequacies in dealing with his students, his colleagues and the people of the neighborhood" must be a continuing and integral part of the prospective urban teacher's curriculum."[14]

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[13] John, Vera, "Environmental Influence on Language Development and Enrichment," December, 1962. (Mimeographed manuscript submitted to Institute for Developmental Studies, Department of Psychiatry, New York Medical College.)

[14] Schueler, Herbert, "The Development of Teachers for Urban Service," October 14, 1963. (Mimeographed copy of speech delivered to the Associated Organizations for Teacher Education, Washington, D. C.) p. 13.

3. Course Work in Elementary School Curriculum and Methology for Prospective Teachers in Depressed Areas Should Hel p Students to Establish and Maintain a HealthyEmotional Classroom Climate.

Suggestions related to the third guideline seem to flow quite naturally from those identified in the discussion of Guideline 2. There is some evidence, in addition to a great deal of conviction among members of the teaching profession, that indicates a teacher's personality to be the key to total effectiveness in any educational enterprise.[15] Those who support this view believe that children respond more positively to the accepting, democratically oriented classroom practitioner.

If the way a teacher behaves toward children is of such great consequence in children's emotional and total inschool performance, then students of elementary curriculum must receive direct guidance in developing the necessary skills for facilitating a supportive emotional climate.

Prospective elementary school teachers of lower-class children will need help in their course work in curriculum to cope with and plan for periods of restlessness, frequent inattentiveness, the need for frequent changes in activities, the high noise level, and the need for self-help in setting limitations on their behavior that are characteristic of children in such communities.

Constructive relationships among peers is as important as in a healthy teacher-pupil rapport. In classrooms where minority groups represent the majority one is bound to find the seeds of some hidden and overt discontent. It is well-known, for example, in New York City that antagonisms exist between members of Negro and Puerto Rican minority groups. Hard though it may be for the young idealistic new teacher to accept, these will be part of the problems with which she may have to live. Until she has found a way to create a supportive, working classroom climate little worthwhile learning will take place.

4. Course Work in Elementary School Curriculum and Methodology for Prospective Teachers in Depressed Areas Should Help Students to Function Democratically in Classrooms and to Set the Climate in Which Democratic Skills Will be Practiced by Boys and Girls.

Implications for Guideline 4 can be clearly seen in the discussion of the previous two guidelines. How a teacher prepares herself and children for democratic classroom living depends a great deal upon the way in which she perceives a democracy in action. In addition success in a democratic venture will depend upon the degree to which children with whom she works have had a successful experience in such an environment.

College methods classes should be models of democratic living. Students must be afforded experiences in serving alternating roles as leaders and members in small and large group situations. Class assignments should

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[15] Bellack, Arno, ed. Theory and Research in Teaching. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1963.

involve student-instructor planning. Students must be given freedom to select realistic projects that have meaning for them.

Persistent instructor domination prevents fluid class interaction. The work of experts in the field of teachers' roles as they relate to classroom interaction should provide the background reading for discussion in college classes as well as in the elementary school.[16/]

5. Course Work in Elementary School Curriculum and Methodology for Prospective Teachers in Depressed Areas Should Help Students to Learn Ways of Arranging a Classroom Environment to Facilitate Interaction and Learning--to Serve as an Educational Tool Both Academically and Aesthetically.

Schoolrooms of the late 1800's and those that were furnished in the beginning of the twentieth century set the pattern for teacher-centered classes in which children were assigned to permanently affixed seats, row upon row, one behind the other. A large percentage of such rooms can be seen today in urban areas. It is possible, in addition, to find rooms arranged in formal rows even though the chairs are now movable.

A teacher's philosophy of education is reflected in the way in which she arranges her classroom. The strict disciplinarian, for example, will probably feel more comfortable in a formal environment in which children face her and sit in an orderly fashion. The more democratically oriented teacher will be more at-home in her teaching, perhaps, if chairs and tables are arranged in a variety of ways depending upon what is going on at the time. Bulletin board displays in a modern elementary school program should reflect the work of children both acdemically and aesthetically.

College methods classes should resemble, whenever possible and appropriate, the model of a democratic elementary school classroom laboratory. Students in such courses need experiences in participating in a variety of group acitvities similar to the ones in which they will involve children. Circular arrangements of seats could be used for effective oral communication. A variety of grouping patterns may be used in social studies project work. A special organizational pattern may be used when a teacher needs to demonstrate an experiment in science. Opportunities for students in methods classes to prepare bulletin board displays must be afforded both in the college classroom and in the elementary school.

It is particularly important for teachers of urban children to learn flexible ways of working with such boys and girls. As was indicated earlier, children from crowded slum dwellings frequently exhibit restless, inattentive behavior. Room arrangements and class activities must meet their needs.

6. Course Work in Elementary School Curriculum and Methodology for Prospective Teachers in Depressed Areas Should Help Students to be Creative in Their Teaching.

"College teachers in teacher education teach a great deal by example. Students are helped in becoming creative teachers as they experience creative

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16/ Ibid., for example.

teaching in college."17/ College teachers must be committed to the philosophy implicit in this statement.

Classroom teachers must exhibit self-confidence and be "supportive enough in class so that students will, at the very least, not have to deal with the teacher's uncertainties while they try to cope with their own."18/ In adition, flexibility in the way in which one teaches and organizes a class for learning are necessary components in a creative, educational enterprise. A creative teacher needs the courage to experiment with a variety of ways of working and with a variety of materials and the tenacity to accept and to benefit from failure. Awareness of one's environment, an acceptance of one's self as a learner, and an openness to new ideas are additional essentials in the equipment of a creative teacher.

Teachers of children from lower-class communities will need to exercise a wide variety of creative ways of working with their children. Since levels of motivation for school for many disadvantaged youngsters are considerably lower than they are for middle-class boys and girls, their teachers must adopt an experimental attitude toward their teaching in order to examine a variety of ways of providing meaningful experiences. They may wish to try different methods of grouping for meeting special interests and needs. It is likely that some teachers would want to develop with their children social studies units the content of which might reflect more closely urban dwellers understandings, attitudes, and interests--unlike what might be prescribed in a curriculum guide. The trend toward more emphasis upon individualized instruction is being recognized by urban teachers as being a suitable direction in which to move. Prospective urban teachers will need guidance in accepting an attitude of experimentation and evaluation as they prepare to meet classroom situations.

Flexibility in the use of curriculum guides and courses of study must be exercised by teachers in urban areas. Creative use of such teaching aids must be an emphasis in elementary methods courses.

Are smaller classes the answer? Should only experienced teachers be the guardians of the educational fates of slum boys and girls, or can beginning teachers become skillful practitioners with such children? Is the non-graded structure one that allows for greater flexibility? Can deprived boys and girls learn to operate effectively in a democratic school environment, or must restrictions be placed upon their activities to help them to become self-disciplined?

Students of methodology who have been exposed to a traditional middle-class approach to teaching and learning will need to develop an openness to new research and experimentation in classroom organization and management, and in the guidance of learning activities. The work of Nancy Rambusch at the New York Foundling Hospital where she is making use of some of the Montessori methods and materials with institutionalized, disadvantaged children should be explored, for example. Experimentation with learning procedures with pre-kindergarten children that has been under the guidance of

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17/ Miel, Alice, ed. Creativity in Teaching. Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., Inc., 1961. p. 220.

18/ Ibid., p. 28

Martin Deutsch at the Institute for Developmental Studies, New York College of Medicine, is another program that deserves consideration.

It is likely that eye has not seen nor ear heard some of the procedures that may hold some of the answers to the staggering question: "What is being done to provide more appropriate schools for slum children?

7. Course Work in Elementary School Curriculum and Methodology for Prospective Teachers in Depressed Areas Should Help Students to Become Skillful in Selecting Appropriate Learning Experiences with and for the Children with Whom They Work.

Instructors of methods courses must make available and then must provide the guidance in the use of a variety of learning resources. New audio-visual materials, children's texts and trade books, field trips, and resource personnel must be examined for their content and educational value and they must be evaluated in terms of their applicability to the urban elementary school classroom. As was mentioned earlier, examination of a variety of courses of study from the resident community as well as from other communities--some of which have population representation similar to that which exists in the resident community--should be helpful to students of elementary curriculum.

Annotated bibliographies of appropriate reading materials for members of minority groups should be studied by methods course students. In addition to the reading of such books as well as other materials that are specifically geared to the interests of urban children they will need help in developing teacher-made materials to meet the needs of some children for whom no materials are available.

8. Course Work in Elementary School Curriculum and Methodology for Prospective Teachers in Depressed Areas Should Help Students to Evaluate Old Concepts Related to Educational Practice as They Apply to Current Experimentation and Research with Specific Reference to Educating Members of Depressed Urban Areas.

All pre- and in-service teachers must become increasingly knowledgeable about the new findings in content areas as they affect children and their learning. Teachers of urban children from depressed communities are no exception. The following points are offered in support of the fact that lower-class urban children may have different learning characteristics and needs than middle-class boys and girls:

A. Miriam Goldberg reports that middle-class children, more often than lower-class boys and girls, are "conceptual, abstract-symbolic, idea-oriented, and verbal" in their learning styles.[19] Reissman upholds this point of view and further states that the mental style of low-income children is characterized as being problem-centered rather than aural, and inductive rather than deductive.[20] Some implications

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[19] Passow, op. cit., p. 80

[20] Weinberg, Meyer. Learning Together: A Book on Integrated Education. Chicago: Integrated Education Associates, 1964. p. 27.

for guiding learning for such children would include:

1. Providing opportunities for children to explore, experiment, and arrive at generalizations through the use of concrete materials for longer period of time than is the custom with middle-class children.
2. Making wider use of trips, experience charts, and colorful and educational bulletin board displays until the development of skills in listening is well on the road to success. (Because of the nature of language problems among lower-class children, listening skills may be slow in developing.)
3. Organizing curriculum experiences around exploratory activities is recommended. For example, the following procedures may be used:
   a. Using a project approach in social studies in which use is made of a variety of resources and opportunities to intellectualize, children will have experience in discovering generalizations.
   b. Affording children a greater number and variety of materials and more time to think in experimenting and generalizing in the activities related to developing scientific concepts.
   c. Giving children materials and time to work independently in solving mathematical problems.21/

B. Since the lives of lower-class children are characteristically somewhat lacking in routine, and because it is believed that such children take on the modes of school living more slowly than do middle-class children, more patience and experimentation with ways of developing social learnings will have to be exercised.

C. Application of new findings reported by experts in the social sciences as they relate to elementary school children may have to be carefully weighed in terms of their applicability for slum urban children. For example, study about the nature of man from an anthropological orientation may hold little interest for the child from a rat-infested tenement who may feel a more immediate need to know something about where he came from, what is his heritage, and what aspects of his heritage can and should he feel good about.

D. Since it is reported by Deutsch and others that one of the greatest handicaps of elementary age slum children is related to language development, urban schools must emphasize those aspects of an effective language arts program that will bring boys and girls up to their levels of maximum capacity and ability.
   1. Using models of clear, well-modulated speech patterns by teachers and through recordings are some ways in which deprived children can be exposed to good conventional language patterns.
   2. Reading stories in which language is both clear and colorful is a way of enhancing language experiences.

21/Bellin, Harry, and Gotkin, Lassar, "Psychological Issues in the Development of Mathematics Curricula for Socially Disadvantaged Children," July, 1964. (Mimeographed copy of revised address to Conference on Mathematics Education held by School Mathematics Study Group, Chicago, April, 1964.)

3. Providing frequent opportunities to talk about experiences that occurred both inside and out of school must be part of the curriculum.
4. Using and developing reading materials suitable to the interests of urban children is essential in depressed areas. Materials published by the Follett Company that were constructed for urban dwellers in Detroit and the recently published Bank Street readers are examples of efforts in this direction. Teachers are finding increasing needs for developing appropriate materials to supplement and substitute in urban school programs. Such an attempt is being launched in one of the off-campus schools affiliated with Hunter College, New York, in which a series of large, drymounted photographs of familiar home, school, and community scenes are to be used as motivation for children's recorded responses, that will in turn be used to develop text for reading materials.
5. Affording children with enough writing skill opportunites to create stories and anecdotes has been found an effective procedure in many schools. This kind of creative effort is perhaps even more valuable for lower-class children who need to be listened to and have, as do all children, stories to tell.

Students of methodology related to lower-calss urban elementary education must have opportunities to try out and to evaluate materials developed and practices recommended in prescribed courses of study through active participation with children in classroom settings.

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